From: Shlomiya Lightfoot
To: Siddiqui, Sumbul
Subject: Hewlett Packard discussion
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 11:21:46 AM

Dear Councilor Siddiqui,

I am writing regarding the issue up for discussion at an upcoming City Council meeting, about ceasing business with Hewlett Packard (HP) until the company ends its support of violence and enabling of human rights violations.

This issue is important to me because I care about human rights for all people, including immigrants, incarcerated individuals, and Palestinian people. It is further personally important because I am a religious Jew who cares about Palestinian human rights.

I know that you are receiving pressure against boycotting HP from groups suggesting that Israel is being singled out and that any move against Israel's human rights violations is anti-Semitic. Israel is not being singled out - it should uphold human rights and comply with international law like other countries. Unfortunately there are many human rights violations around the world, but that doesn't mean that pressuring Israel can only happen once all other problems have been resolved. Also, boycott strategies involve selecting particular companies and advancing on incremental efforts to create larger change. Also, the move against HP is not only for Palestinian rights, but also because HP's technologies help the United States oppress immigrants and incarcerated individuals.

Some people are arguing that technologies, and companies developing and selling them, are values-neutral. I just completed my Ph.D. at MIT in Science, Technology, and Policy, and I explored these questions and found that technology can carry values, for good or for ill, for which its developers and producers often can and should be held accountable.

It can be hard to stand up to pressure, particularly smearing accusations, but please stand with justice on this question. Cambridge can be a leader in this area. As a long-time Cambridge resident I am proud of my city for considering this matter and I would be proud of my city and my councilmembers for moving on it to advance human rights here and abroad.

I would be very pleased to discuss this matter with you further if I can be at all helpful. I am on email and at 617-599-2904.

Thank you very much.

All the best,
Shlomiya Lightfoot

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